

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 12, 2006. Claims 1 to 31 and 46 to 64 remain pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Initially, the Office Action noted that Claims 1, 14 to 16, 29 to 31, 46, 59 and 60 may be subject to obviousness-type double-patenting over Claims 1, 14, 26, 70 and 101 of co-pending Application No. 09/747,097. Inasmuch as no rejection was entered, either provisional or otherwise, it is believed that no response is needed at this time. Moreover, since the claims of the '097 application have not in fact been patented, no rejection could be maintained at this time.

Claims 1 to 14, 16 to 29, 31, 46 to 59, 61 and 63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,611,050 (Theimer) in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0007422 (Bennett) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,955 (Foote), and Claims 15, 30, 60, 62 and 64 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Theimer in view of Bennett and Foote and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,633,932 (Davis). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The present invention as defined by independent Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46 concerns a device providing a user with exclusive control over the device's capabilities. Some important features of the invention reside in the use of two queues: a reservation queue of users requesting to obtain exclusive control over a device's capabilities, and a job queue of jobs. According to the invention, the device receives a request from an information processing apparatus (e.g., an external PC) to provide the user with exclusive

control over the device's capabilities. The device, in turn, determines whether it is available for the user to obtain exclusive control. If so, the user is provided with exclusive control of the device's capabilities. However, if the device is not available for the user to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities, the user is added to a reservation queue of users requesting exclusive control of the device's capabilities. Then, if the device provides exclusive control of its capabilities to the user when the user is a first position within the reservation queue, a job at a first position with a job queue, corresponding to a user other than the user who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, is deferred from being processed during a period in which the user, who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities maintains exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

Thus, according to the invention, users wanting to obtain control of the device are placed in a reservation queue, and if the user is provided with exclusive control when the user reaches the first position within the reservation queue, jobs pending in the job queue for other users are deferred during the period in which the user has exclusive control.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of, a device receiving a request from a user to provide the user with exclusive control of the device's capabilities and, in a case where the device determines that it is not available to provide the user requesting to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities with exclusive control, adding the user to a reservation queue of users requesting to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities, wherein, if the device provides exclusive

control of the device's capabilities to the user when the user is at a first position within the reservation queue, a job at a first position within a job queue, corresponding to a user other than the user who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, is deferred from being processed during a period in which the user, who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, maintains exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

Theimer merely disclose that a user is remotely identified and a device in close proximity to the location of the user is controlled so as to provide the user with the ability to use the device based on policy information of the user. Specifically, as seen in Fig. 18, a Device Agent for a particular device provides appropriate ownership rights with a user in a case where the device is not exclusively owned by another when the user commands the Device Agent to generate an ownership request. However, in a case where the device is exclusively owned by another, the Device Agent does not add the ownership request to a reservation queue, but denies the ownership request altogether. If the user wants to acquire the appropriate ownership rights, the user further commands the Device Agent to generate a new ownership request. Thus, as readily admitted in the Office Action, Theimer fails to disclose any mechanism for providing the user with control over a particular device that may already be exclusively owned by another user. Moreover, Theimer fails to disclose that the user requesting ownership rights is added to a reservation queue of users requesting ownership rights, much less that a first job in a job queue is deferred if the user is provided exclusive control when they are at a first position within the reservation queue.

Bennett merely discloses software applications that control various types of equipment, where more than one application can access the equipment to perform an operation. Different types of access include "exclusive read" access, "read" access, "exclusive write" access, or "write" access, where the read and write access privileges are mutually exclusive. If one application has been granted "exclusive read" access, another application cannot be granted either "exclusive read" or "read" access. Likewise, if one application has been granted "exclusive write" access, another application cannot be granted either "exclusive write" or "write" access. In either of these cases where access has been granted to another application, the application requesting access is placed in a wait queue (depending on the priority of the requesting application). There are 4 types of wait queues (read, write, exclusive read, and exclusive write) corresponding to the requested type of access. Thus, while Bennett may place an application requesting access to a resource in a wait queue, such a disclosure may, at best, be seen to correspond to the claimed reservation queue. That is, each application requesting access is requesting to perform a function (read, write), and therefore, placing the application in a wait queue is best seen to correspond to placing the access request in reservation queue. Once the application is granted access, the application is notified of the same and it can then perform the function associated with the access request. However, Applicants fail to seen anything in Bennett or Theimer corresponding to the use of both a reservation queue of users requesting exclusive control of a device's capabilities, and a job queue of jobs, much less that the two queues function in conjunction with one another if exclusive control is provided when the user is at a first position in the reservation queue so as to defer a job at a

first position in the job queue corresponding to a different user. Accordingly, a combination of Bennett and Theimer still would not have resulted in the present invention.

Davis is not seen to add anything to overcome the deficiencies of Theimer and Bennett. Specifically, Davis merely discloses deferring printing of a document until a printing node locally authenticates the intended recipient. That is, Davis merely requires a user to be authenticated before a received print job is printed out. Since authentication of the user is not included in Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46, Davis fails to make up for Theimer and Bennett's deficiencies.

Applicants also believe that the Office Action is simply misapplying the art against the claimed invention. Specifically, the invention utilizes both the reservation queue of users requesting to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities in conjunction with the separate job queue. As claimed, if the user is provided exclusive control of the device, a job at a first position pending in the job queue for another user is deferred so that jobs pending for the user that is provided with exclusive control of the device can be processed. These features are simply not believed to be taught by the applied references, either alone or in any permissible combination.

In view of the forgoing amendments and remarks, all of Claims 1 to 31 and 46 to 64 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW

In the event that the Examiner decides to maintain the rejections, an interview with the Examiner to discuss the rejections in an attempt to advance prosecution on the merits is respectfully requested. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to schedule an interview in the event the rejections are maintained.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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